# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:151
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2007
TELEPHONE REVOLUTION IN RURAL AREAS
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the revolution on telephone have not reached to the rural areas in the country ;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ;

(c) whether the private telephone operators and even BSNL are failed to achieve the target for providing telephone facilities in rural areas in the country ;

(d) if so, the details thereof ;

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to take the telephone revolution to the rural areas in the country ;

(f) whether the Government has an elaborate strategy to ensure that the North East users in IT-Revolution of sorts;

(g) if so, the details thereof alongwith the broad features of the strategy and the goals contemplated in this regard; and

(h) the allocation likely to be made for funding the strategy ?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a)to(e)New Telecom Policy 1999 envisaged a target of 4% teledensity in rural areas by the year 2010. As against the same, the rural teledensity is 6.45 % as on 30.06.2007.

The steps taken for providing better telecom services in the rural areas of the country include International Money Order Services alia:-

(i)Support from Universal Service Obligation fund (USOF) for provisioning of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in all the 1685 net cost positive Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs).

(ii) USOF support for providing Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 undisputed accessible and inhabited villages having population more than 100 by November 2007.

(iii) Large-scale deployment of WLL network in rural areas.

(iv) Support from USOF for the innovative scheme of sharing of infrastructure by USO Fund to set up 7871 number of infrastructure sites (towers) spread over 500 districts in the country.

(f)&(g)The Department of Information Techonology (DIT) had taken up a Scheme and established 487 Community Information Centres (CICs) at the Block level in 8 States of the North East at a projected cost of Rs. 242 crores, for establishing and running these CICs for 5 years, after which the CICs were to be managed by the State Governments concerned. A further 68 CICs were also established in the North East in 2005.

The Government has recently approved a Scheme for facilitating the establishment and running of 100,000 broad band Internet enabled Kiosks termed as Common Service Centres (CSCs) across the country including the North East, for a period of four years.These centers would be established through a Public Private Partnership and it is envisaged that these centres would provide Government and private services at the doorstep of the citizen.The detailed guidelines of the CSC Scheme are accessible at www.mit.gov.in. Under the Scheme guidelines, the States have also been given the choice of integrating the CICs into the CSC Scheme.

(h)The total cost of providing support for setting up and running these centers over a four year period is estimated at Rs. 5742 crores.Out of this the Government contribution is estimated at Rs. 1649 crores, of which Rs. 793 crores is estimated to come from the State Government and Rs. 856 crores from the Central Government.The balance contribution is estimated to come from the private sector. The CSC Scheme was approved by the Government in September 2006.